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# THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine  
of Western Ornithology

Published Bi-Monthly by the  
Cooper Ornithological Club

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## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

There is a growing custom among museum and private collectors concerning which a word of caution may be in order. We refer to that of securing the services of missionaries, traders, prospectors, and others not well versed in ornithology to gather eggs of rare northern birds, these eggs to be preserved and distributed as scientific specimens. It is extremely difficult in many cases to insure accurate identity of the various geese, ducks, waders and gulls even by the trained field naturalist. Although a few bird skins may have been saved, the discrimination of species on the ground where scores of individuals representing many species nest in close proximity to one another, is a difficult matter. The tendency to *gather in* a big showing is liable to overcome the best of intentions with regard to accuracy. The grave danger scientifically comes of course when data accompanying such eggs is published. We have no doubt but that there are many bad records in our literature traceable to some such source. This danger should be vigorously guarded against, even if by so doing a museum collection does not grow so rapidly.

Mr. J. H. Riley and Mr. N. Hollister, both of the staff of the United States National Museum, spent a portion of the past summer collecting in western Alberta and eastern British Columbia. Specimens, practically topotypes, of Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, White-tailed Ptarmigan and Franklin Grouse, were obtained.

Part V of Ridgway's "Birds of North and Middle America" is reported almost ready for distribution, Mr. Ridgway being now occupied upon Part VI. His color book is to be expected shortly as all the color work has been done and only the text remains to be printed.

Mr. G. Willett's "Birds of Southern California" is nearly ready for the printer. It is to be published by the Cooper Ornithological Club as Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 7, and distributed free to all members. Its cost will be defrayed by private subscription. Mr. Willett's contribution will consist of an exhaustive compilation of all that is known to date in regard to the manner of occurrence of the birds of that part of southern California lying west of the desert divide. We look forward with great interest to the appearance of this carefully executed work.

There will shortly appear from the University of California Press two notable papers chiefly of an ornithological nature. These are: Mr. H. S. Swarth's report upon the Alexander Expedition to Vancouver Island in 1910, and the concluding part of Mr. W. P. Taylor's report upon the field work of the Alexander Expedition to Nevada in 1909.

Mr. W. Leon Dawson spent a goodly portion of the field season just closed in out-door work contributory to his projected "Birds of California." The Farallone Islands and the Mount Whitney region shared in this year's attention, each locality contributing to Mr. Dawson's stock of first-hand ornithology. The editor of THE CONDOR has been privileged to examine some of the photos obtained, and he enthusiastically asserts that they include some of the most successful bird photographs he has ever seen.

## PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED.

BIRDS AND MAMMALS OF THE 1909 ALEXANDER ALASKA EXPEDITION BY HARRY S. SWARTH. [=Univ. Calif. Publ., Zool., VII, pp. 9-172, pls. 1-6; Jan. 12, 1911].

In continuation of its well-planned and well-executed campaign in Alaska, the University